

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified Application is respectfully requested. Claims 3-11, 13-20 and 22-25 are in the case. Claims 1, 2, 11, 12 and 21 have been canceled. The Abstract has been amended.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the allowability of Claims 3-10, 13-20 and 22-25 if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and in independent form. Applicant has so rewritten these claims, and in view of the arguments that follow, applicants respectfully request that the associated objection to these claims be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

Regarding the objection to the Abstract, it is respectfully pointed out that the Abstract as originally submitted is in single paragraph form. Nonetheless, the Abstract has been reduced in size by amendment herein. It contains fewer than 250 words, and is in proper form. Wherefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 3-11, 13-20 and 22-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, this rejection is respectfully traversed. The rejection centers on language in Claims 3 and 22 referring to the Driver Disable signal being "asserted," and in conjunction with this rejection Applicant was requested to explain what "asserted" is and what is the level of "Drive[r] Disable" when "a Drive[r] Disable signal is asserted." It is initially noted that the term "assert" is in widespread and common usage in the electronics arts with respect to signals to indicate that a signal having a function, such as "inhibit," or "enable," or "on," etc., is in the state in which that function is to be caused by that signal. Typically such state is positive, as contrasted with zero, or ground, but the reverse may be true depending on whether the logic is positive or negative. Thus, as a matter of common usage the "assert" used with Driver Disable signal means that the Driver Disable signal is at the level in which it will disable the driver. Other terminology is also in common usage with respect to signals to express the same concept, such as "becomes active," "is high" (with positive logic) and "positively

transitions (again, with positive logic). This is how the term is used in the Specification. In fact, such terms are used interchangeably in the Specification, all with the same meaning. For example, referring to page 7 of the Specification, at line 7 it is stated that the Clamp Enable signal "becomes active," meaning that it goes to a level that activates the clamping function. In Figure 4 it can be seen that this is a positive signal level. Still on page 7, at line 13, it is stated that the Clamp Enable signal "is asserted," meaning the same thing as "becomes active," as just described. Earlier in page 7, at line 2, it is stated that an incoming signal "positively transitions (that is, transitions away from ground level toward a voltage supply level)."

Turning to the claims, Claim 3 recites that "the activation element is configured to assert the Clamp Enable signal in response to the transition of the received signal that occurs during a period in which a Driver Disable signal is asserted ." An example of this is found in the Specification, again at page 7, lines 7-9, "In one embodiment, the Clamp Enable signal becomes active {i.e., is asserted} a predetermined time after a first positive transition of the received signal provided the Driver Disable signal has disabled the output driver 110 {i.e., has been asserted} on the same card 130." Similar language appears in Claim 22, and similar arguments apply thereto.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claims 3 and 22 are clear and definite, and supported in the Specification, and that therefore the claims which depend therefrom are also clear, definite and supported in the Specification. Wherefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 11, 12 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), these claims have been canceled, thus rendering this rejection moot. Wherefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

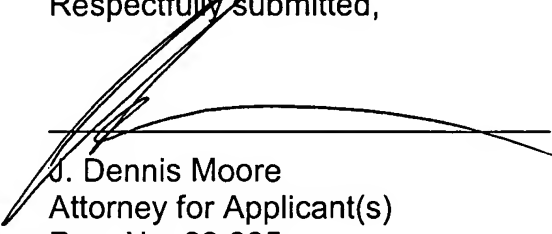
It is respectfully submitted that the claims recite the patentably distinguishing features of the invention and that, taken together with the above remarks, the present application is now in proper form for allowance.

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, and allowance of the claims are requested at an early date.

While it is believed that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance, should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned in order to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

To the extent necessary, the Applicants petition for an Extension of Time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136. Please charge any fees in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees to the Deposit Account No. 20-0668 of Texas Instruments Incorporated.

Respectfully submitted,



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